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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/763,719	01/23/2004	Thomas Zdeblick	4002-3456/PC261.21	7326

7590 12/08/2004

Woodard, Emhardt, Moriarty,
McNett & Henry LLP
Bank One Center/Tower
111 Monument Circle, Suite 3700
Indianapolis, IN 46204-5137

EXAMINER

STEWART, ALVIN J

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3738

DATE MAILED: 12/08/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/763,719	ZDEBLICK ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Alvin J Stewart	3738	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 12 October 2004.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 15-23, 39-55 and 63-71 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 15-23, 39-52, 54, 55, 65, 67 and 71 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 53, 63-66 and 68-70 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 24 January 2004 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>10/12/04</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Art Unit: 3738

Election/Restrictions

Claims 1-14, 24-38 and 56-62 are canceled.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

Claims 53, 63-66 and 68-70 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Ray US Patent 6,042,582.

Ray discloses a distraction device comprising an elongated stem (26) having a first end, a second end, a longitudinal axis, a length along the axis, a flange projecting outward (24), a threaded bore (28) extending between the first end and the second end.

Regarding claim 47, see Fig. 1.

Regarding claim 53, see Fig. 3.

Claims 63-66 and 68-70 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Pisharodi US Patent 5,601,556.

Pisharodi discloses a distraction device to reduce spondylolisthesis comprising means for distracting an intervertebral space and means for reducing a spondylolisthesis condition between the adjacent vertebrae having a first end, a second end, a longitudinal axis, a length along the axis, and a flange projecting outward.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 15-23, 39-52, 54, 55, 65, 67, and 71 are allowed.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 10/12/04 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

The Examiner still believes that the Ray and the Pisharodi references read on different claims. The Examiner has interpreted independent claims 53 & 63 as follow:

- Stem portion – element 14;
- Height – see “h” in Figure 1 and Figure 5;
- Height corresponding to a select distracted height of the intervertebral space – see Figure 5;
- Transverse flange portion – element 24, see Fig. 5;
- Surgical instrument – 100. Wherein the surgical instrument is capable of receiving the stem portion.

Regarding the word “engaged” the Examiner has interpreted the word broadly, therefore, the stem portion and the surgical instrument engage to each other.

Note: Expressions relating the apparatus to contents thereof during an intended operation are of no significance in determining patentability of the apparatus claim. *Ex parte Thibault*, 164 USPQ 666, 667 (Bd. App. 1969).

Regarding claim 63, surfaces 36 of flange 24 abut and is capable of applying an axial force to the walls of the vertebrae (see Figure 5 and col. 5, lines 14-20).

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Alvin J Stewart whose telephone number is 703-305-0277. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 7:00AM-5:30PM(1 Friday B-week off).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Corrine McDermott can be reached on 703-308-2111. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Art Unit: 3738

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Alvin J Stewart
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3738

December 06, 2004.